



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA  
CREEKS RESTORATION/WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**July 1, 2010**

**Parks and Recreation Conference Room, 620 Laguna Street**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Moldaver called the meeting to order at 12:05pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Committee members present: Chair Moldaver, Paul Bullock, Natasha Lohmus, Betsy Weber, Daniel Wilson

Committee members absent: None

Liaison members present: Planning Commissioner Michael Jordan

Liaison members absent: Councilmember Michael Self

Staff present: Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager Cameron Benson, Creeks Outreach Coordinator Liz Smith

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one wished to speak.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Benson reported that he received a phone call and email from Mr. Moldaver regarding the proposed development at 512 Bath Street asking whether the Committee had an opportunity to comment on the project; that while Creeks Division staff was aware of the project and submitted comments, generally development applications are not brought to the Committee; and, that the Committee primarily deals with "big picture" items like the General Plan Update and policy issues.

**4. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**a. 401 Las Positas Road – Status Report**

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive an update on the Creeks Division's potential purchase of real property located at 401 Las Positas Road.

Documents:

Staff Report – July 2010

Speakers:

Cameron Benson, Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager

Mr. Benson reported that a 1.54 acre property along Arroyo Burro Creek, located at 401 Las Positas, was listed for sale in May at an asking price of \$550,000; that staff has identified this property as a priority site that the Creeks Division would like to purchase and restore; that he spoke to Mr. Moldaver and Mr. Bullock regarding the property after the May 12 Committee meeting, and then with City Council on May 22 in closed session to discuss purchasing the property; and, that upon the Council's direction to move forward, ordered a preliminary title report and an appraisal of the property.

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Committee members discussed site constraints, the potential for development on the site, and development impacts on the creek should the Creeks Division not purchase the property; whether property acquisition would be an appropriate use of Measure B funds; whether the Creeks Division Funding Guidelines can be interpreted to include property acquisition; and, whether purchasing an easement along the creek rather than the entire property would make sense.

Committee members also discussed whether property owners on the other side of the creek would be open to restoration on their property; and, future plans for the intersection of Las Positas Road and Cliff Drive, as well as the intent for Caltrans to eventually relinquish the right of way on Las Positas Road to the City.

Committee members asked questions regarding grant opportunities to purchase and restore property; and, whether the Elings Park Foundation, the Trust for Public Land, the Land Trust for the County of Santa Barbara, or the City's General Fund may want to partner on the purchase.

Mr. Benson reported that staff has been and will continue to look for grant opportunities to purchase the property, but that the Committee should consider that grant funds may not be available; that the City Parks and Recreation Department was interested in purchasing the property in the 1990s but did not have funds available.

Mr. Bullock expressed his concern that property acquisition may not be an authorized use of Measure B funds; that the funds could be useful on another project; that the Funding Guidelines do not expressly mention purchasing property; and, that if the Committee amends the Funding Guidelines, that they will be open to further amendments.

Ms. Lohmus expressed support for moving forward with the purchase; and, noted that biologically the site has connectivity to open space, and that while it may not be the best spot to purchase land, since it is the only current option it is at the top of the list.

Mr. Wilson expressed support for moving forward with the purchase; and, suggested that with the opportunity for restoration and open space beyond the creek restoration and the greater benefit to the City, the General Fund should be involved in the purchase as well.

Mr. Jordan expressed his support for the purchase, but asked that staff be prepared for questions from the public regarding purchasing real property that is not developable; and, suggested that part of the education process should include how the price was negotiated, and answering as many questions as possible up front.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion:

Committee members Wilson/Lohmus to adjourn.

Chair Moldaver adjourned the meeting at 1:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Benson  
Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager